

the 100th anniversary of Girl Scouts of the USA and recognizing the Girl Scouts of Texas Oklahoma Plains. I look forward to the members of this Council becoming the next generation of strong American leaders.

HONORING THE MODESTO ARCH

HON. JEFF DENHAM

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 23, 2012

Mr. DENHAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to acknowledge and honor the rich heritage of the Modesto Arch as it celebrates 100 years of symbolic history in the Central Valley.

Early settlements in the great Central Valley of California were established along the only transportation routes available at the time—the rivers. In 1854, Stanislaus County had a population under 1,000 individuals. The county was named after Estanislao, a Native American who fought battles along the rivers in the area. A statue was recently dedicated in the Stanislaus County Courthouse Park to honor Chief Estanislao.

If you've lived in Modesto for any length of time, you've probably heard the story of how the city got its name. Originally laid out by the Central Pacific Railroad, there was an effort made to name the new village after one of the people involved with the development of the railroad venture—William C. Ralston, a San Francisco banker. Not wanting his name to be associated with something so new, he declined “modestly”—hence the name and the legend of Modesto.

In 1871, Modesto was voted the county seat of Stanislaus County; and from then on, it became the permanent trading center of the county. In 1884, it was incorporated; and in the same year, steps were taken to organize irrigation districts to supply water for the surrounding lands, which were devoted to grain growing and cattle. It was not until 1904, that the long fight for irrigation was won and the irrigation works were completed. From that point, colonization and development had been rapid and Modesto has grown as the metropolis within the county.

In 1912, the Modesto Arch—located at 9th and I Streets—was constructed by the Modesto Booster Club, founders of the Modesto Chamber of Commerce. The arch spanned the entrance to the city for many years. Other than a short move during the Ninth Street expansion and a recent refurbishment, there has never been a real threat to dismantle the city's most famous landmark. There are 696 light bulbs on the arch, and it was christened with a bottle of canal water.

The unique Modesto Arch is inscribed with “Water, Wealth, Contentment, Health,” which was selected over “Nobody's Got Modesto's Goat.”

One hundred years later, Modesto's esteemed landmark has been restored to its original glory. Community volunteers developed plans to update the lighting, patch the concrete, restore the original color scheme, replace the flag poles, and reinforce the structure, so the Arch will stand as a Modesto icon for another century.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in celebrating with the Modesto Chamber of Commerce and the City of Modesto for their efforts in protecting a landmark and the heritage of our community. The Arch bears witness to Modesto's past and future. Congratulations on the last 100 years and the restoration effort to keep “Water, Wealth, Contentment, Health” for generations to come.

HONORING OMEGA BOYS CLUB/ STREET SOLDIERS

HON. BARBARA LEE

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 23, 2012

Ms. LEE of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the 25th Anniversary of the Omega Boys Club/Street Soldiers, an award-winning Bay Area non-profit organization providing a safe space for thousands of at-risk youth to learn violence-prevention skills, survive hardship and thrive in their communities. Under the helm of Executive Director, Dr. Joseph E. Marshall, Jr. and cofounder Jack Jacqua, young men and women throughout the San Francisco Bay Area have gained conflict reduction tools, mentorship opportunities and a new outlook on life—helping them to achieve stellar education, career and family goals that seemed previously out of reach.

In 1987, two middle school teachers, Joe Marshall and Jack Jacqua, began the Omega Boys Club/Street Soldiers as a program of the Potrero Hill Neighborhood House in response to growing numbers of African American young people dropping out of school and becoming dangerously involved in illegal activity. At first the Club offered traditional activities in recreation and education, but the founders soon adopted an innovative public health intervention method to address the systemic culture of violence deeply ingrained in every facet of the youths' communities. Omega decided to treat violence as a disease that must be diagnosed, addressed and eradicated.

As a result of this early vision, the Omega Leadership Academy has provided more than 1300 boys and girls with academic support, life skills training, college preparation and assistance securing scholarships—all free of charge. With over 175 college graduates and 40 graduate school graduates (and counting), the program has a proven track record of not only changing—but saving lives. Through wrap-around, targeted life services, Omega has kept countless youth out of harm's way and free from incarceration. Moreover, the Omega Training Institute teaches individuals who work with youth—like police officers, development workers and school faculty—how to employ the Omega model's Alive & Free Prescription violence prevention methodology. This program, along with its Street Soldiers National Consortium, School Adoption Program, outreach-conducting Street Soldiers Violence Prevention Program and its acclaimed Nationally Syndicated Street Soldiers Radio Show, have impacted more than 15,000 Bay Area students and countless more across the nation.

Dr. Marshall and Mr. Jacqua have personally spent their entire careers preparing young men and women to achieve their dreams and positively contribute to society. These achievements are unparalleled, and the renowned success of Omega Boys Club/Street Soldiers reflect their many decades of compassionate sacrifice, hard work and groundbreaking ingenuity. I also want to thank and congratulate Omega's many students and alumni for their amazing commitment to pursue these hard-earned achievements.

Omega has proven that communities benefit when youth are given opportunities to live, study and participate as informed and valued citizens. The Omega Boys Club/Street Soldiers is more than a destination for youth seeking a new path; it's a gathering place, a place to find common cause and friendship, and a place to learn and grow. Ultimately, Omega is a place that teaches and empowers all of us to recommit to the principles of non-violence each and every day.

On behalf of California's 9th Congressional District, I want to extend my congratulations on this 25-year milestone in your mission to keep young people “alive and free.” I thank all of the many people who have contributed to the continued success of the Omega Boys Club/Street Soldiers and wish you the very best in the coming years.

RECOGNIZING RESOUNDING SMALL BUSINESS, J & W SMOKEHOUSE OF MOUND BAYOU, MISSISSIPPI

HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, October 23, 2012

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor minority owned business, J & W Smokehouse in Mound Bayou, Mississippi. Owned and operated by Kennedy and Jean Johnson, J & W Smokehouse is a barbeque staple in the Mound Bayou community.

Since the age of sixteen, Kennedy dreamed of owning his own business. In 2009, on a quest to fulfill his passion for cooking, he and his wife Jean opened J & W Smokehouse.

Developing much of his skills from observing his father Mr. Eddie Johnson, Sr., Kennedy utilized his skills & unique grilling technique to master what has become known as the best barbeque in the Mississippi Delta.

The noteworthy recipes of the Johnson's have drawn the attention of specialty foods stores as well as online distributors which have aided in the great success of J & W Smokehouse.

Today, J & W Smokehouse services a multitude of clients and barbeque lovers in the Mound Bayou area.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing J & W Smokehouse and owners Kennedy and Jean Johnson for their contributions to the Mound Bayou community and their resounding entrepreneurial spirit.